

# **A Preservice Teacher's Delivery of Sport Education: Influences, Difficulties and Continued Use**

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How preservice teachers (PSTs) learn and deliver Sport Education (*SE*) (Siedentop, 1994) is an area researchers believe warrants further investigation (Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a). This study explores one PST's experiences delivering *SE* during a school teaching placement after undertaking a practical *SE* module in his Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) program. Data were collected through pre, mid- and postteaching placement interviews, along with weekly visits by the first author where observation reflections and interviews were used to investigate his experiences delivering *SE*. Data were triangulated and analyzed using thematic coding. Occupational socialization (Lawson, 1983a, 1983b) was used to determine the factors which influenced his delivery of *SE*. Results showed his *SE* season was influenced by his teaching orientation, sporting experiences, PETE program and school context where he was teaching. Although he encountered difficulties, he valued *SE*'s benefits and continued to use it during his subsequent career as a qualified teacher.

**Keywords:** sport education, physical education teacher education, occupational socialization, models-based approach, pre-service teacher

Sport Education (*SE*) is a curriculum and instructional model for physical education which aims to develop students as competent, literate and enthusiastic sportspeople through experiencing sport authentically (Siedentop, 1994, p. 3–4). *SE* differs from traditional sporting units as sports are delivered in extended seasons, students affiliate to a team for the duration of the season, and adopt roles and responsibilities within their team. The season is organized around a formal competition phase and ends with a culminating event. Concepts such as record keeping and festivity are continually encouraged throughout the season to make the experience more meaningful and enjoyable for the participants (Siedentop, Hastie, & Van Der Mars, 2011). To date there have been three comprehensive reviews of literature on *SE* (Hastie, de Ojeda, & Luquin, 2011; Kinchin, 2006; Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2005), highlighting the overwhelming successes of the module in a variety of settings. It has been

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identified that there is a lack of research concerning how preservice or in-service teachers learn and use *SE* (McMahon & MacPhail, 2007; Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2010), with some researchers suggesting that this type of research is vital for the effective development of *SE* (McCaughtry, Sofo, Rovegno, & Curtner-Smith, 2004).

There are varied findings in the literature regarding preservice and beginning teacher's experiences teaching *SE* for the first time. Preservice teachers (PSTs) have been observed omitting vital aspects of the model and struggling with the increased workload required (McCaughtry et al., 2004), as well as struggling to embed tactical game play in a *SE* season and encouraging students to work with each other (McMahon & MacPhail, 2007). The PST in McMahon and MacPhail's (2007) study admitted to not having sufficient opportunities to learn *SE* in her Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) program, while McCaughtry et al. (2004) believed that the PSTs' initial misunderstandings of *SE* resulted in them never appreciating and learning the *SE* model effectively. Curtner-Smith, Hastie and Kinchin (2008) also reported that some beginning teachers had difficulty maintaining the fidelity to the model. Conversely, Curtner-Smith and Sofo (2004) observed that PSTs preferred *SE* to multiactivity teaching (Siedentop, Mand, & Taggart, 1986) and that *SE*'s structure facilitated smoother lessons, which were more beneficial to their students. Sinelnikov (2009) observed similar positive findings with two teachers who took part in *SE* in-service training. These teachers taught *SE* effectively but had some difficulties of initially relinquishing control and sought confirmation of the appropriateness of their teaching of *SE*, with such worries easing as the season progressed. Stran and Curtner-Smith (2009a, 2009b, 2010) have since observed two PSTs teaching *SE* successfully, believing one of the primary reasons being the quality of their PETE program in offering effective experiences to learn *SE*. There is, however, little evidence of teachers' continuing use of *SE* after its initial introduction to their physical education programs (Alexander & Luckman, 2001).

The inclusion and effectiveness of *SE* in PETE programs is another area that has received limited attention in the research studies on *SE* (Kinchin, Penney, & Clarke, 2005). It has been suggested that *SE* should be a primary component of PETE programs (Alexander & Luckman, 2001; Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004; Dyson, Griffin, & Hastie, 2004) and descriptive analysis of PETE programs show that it is the most popular curricular model being taught in PETE in the United States (Ayers & Housner, 2008). Kinchin et al. (2005) have recognized that many of the *SE* seasons reported in the literature were delivered by experienced teachers, highlighting the importance of PETE programs to develop teachers with such expertise.

Curtner-Smith (2012) reviewed the literature on *SE* in PETE and has compiled recommendations for PETE programs to train their PSTs to use *SE* effectively. One of the most common of these recommendations is for PETE programs to provide PSTs with the opportunity to experience *SE* as a participant, where subject matter knowledge is delivered through a *SE* season, enhancing the PSTs' understanding and appreciation of *SE* (Collier, 1998; Gurvitch, Lund, & Metzler, 2008; Jenkins, 2004; Kinchin, 2003; Kinchin et al., 2005; Oslin, Collier, & Mitchell, 2001). Kinchin et al. (2005) believed such an experience should be preceded by an initial lecture on *SE* and encompass lectures developed by both PETE faculty and teachers who have taught *SE*. It has been recommended that PSTs should have an opportunity to observe *SE* being taught successfully in schools (Collier, 1998; Kinchin, 2003; Kinchin et al., 2005) and to teach *SE* on early field experiences and final year

teaching placements in schools with both faculty and self-designed seasons (Collier, 1998; Kinchin, 2003; Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a). Curtner-Smith (2012) believed that a number of conditions are favorable for PSTs teaching *SE* for the first time, including being supervised by faculty familiar with *SE*, dispositions of students to be involved in *SE* and holding PSTs accountable for effectively implementing the model. PSTs are encouraged to teach faculty designed seasons ensuring they teach all aspects of the model and experience the model's advantages (Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a). Future seasons may be designed by the PSTs, allowing them to experiment with their own versions and visions of *SE*. Partnerships between schools, and school-based research on *SE*, is also encouraged and have been observed to aid PSTs' learning of *SE* (Kinchin, 2012; Kinchin et al., 2005). Curtner-Smith (2012) believes that the more these strategies are provided in PETE, the more beneficial the learning experience will be, and PSTs' learning, and possibility of using *SE*, will be increased.

Minimal PETE research provides an insight into the effectiveness of the above recommendations. Oslin et al.'s (2001) PETE program offered an experience of a *SE* season similar to what school students were likely to experience, where PSTs would "live the curriculum". Oslin et al. (2001) commented that the PSTs used *SE* with ease during their teaching placements and had improved their understanding of the concepts of *SE*. Jenkins (2004) and Kinchin (2003) provided comparable experiences to PSTs with similar consequences in their implementation of *SE*. The construction of such experiences requires considerable time and effort (Kinchin, 2003) and requires PETE faculty to possess adequate knowledge in both the content to be taught and *SE* (Oslin et al., 2001).

## Theoretical Framework and Purpose

Occupational socialization has emerged as a framework to understand how PSTs learn and practice *SE* during and after their PETE programs (e.g., Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a; Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004; Curtner-Smith, 2001; Hutchinson, 1993). Occupational socialization has been defined as "all kinds of socialization that initially influence persons to enter the field of physical education and that later are responsible for their perceptions and actions as teacher educators and teachers" (Lawson, 1986, p. 107). Lawson (1983a) proposed that three kinds of socialization are possible for teachers: (a) "acculturation", (b) "professional socialization" and (c) "organizational socialization".

"Acculturation" refers to any experience that influences teachers to pursue their future profession. Acculturation begins at birth and these experiences are more influential at shaping PSTs attitudes toward teaching than teacher education (Lortie, 1975). From a young age, students are exposed to teachers and sport in school and from this exposure they comprehend the role of a teacher and develop opinions on how to teach (Schempp & Graber, 1992). These experiences are called the "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975), and act as the first introduction to the teaching profession. Each person develops a subjective warrant, which consists of their perceptions of the requirements for teacher education and for teaching in schools (Lawson, 1983a). Lawson (1983a) hypothesized that from the acculturation phase two types of recruits pursue a career in physical education teaching: (a) those with a more prominent coaching orientation and (b) those who favor a

teaching orientation. Lawson (1983a, 1983b) suggests that teachers with a coaching orientation will view teaching as a career contingency and will possess custodial orientations and have a low commitment to teaching. On the other hand, teachers with a teaching orientation will view coaching as a career contingency and will be more likely to possess innovative orientations and have a higher commitment to teaching. It has since been acknowledged that recruits may possess a moderate coaching orientation. Curtner-Smith et al. (2008) describe these recruits as those who are not adverse to teaching physical education, but are more attracted to the role of physical education teaching by the prospect of working with extracurricular sports teams within the school.

"Professional socialization" refers to the process where "would be and experienced teachers acquire and maintain the values, sensitivities, skills, and knowledge that are deemed ideal for teaching physical education" (Lawson 1983a, p. 4), and is expected to occur in teacher education programs. Lawson (1983a) suggests that recruits' previously acquired subjective warrant can act as a resistance to efforts made by teacher educators to challenge them. It is imperative that teacher educators do all they can to structure PETE programs in such a way that is beneficial to PSTs' development and the production of effective physical education teachers.

"Organizational socialization" refers to "the process by means of which prospective and experienced teachers acquire and maintain custodial ideology and the knowledge and skills that are valued and rewarded by the organization" (Lawson, 1983a, p. 4). Teachers are introduced to a "landscape of teaching" that varies in school (Schempp & Graber, 1992) and often face a dialectical process where their subjective warrant and orientation to teaching, along with knowledge acquired in their PETE program, may be challenged within the school they are teaching (Lawson, 1983b). Schempp and Graber (1992) describe this as "fitting in and fighting back" (p. 341), where teachers with orientations opposed to those of the school will adapt their practices to fit in or continue with their orientations and fight back against the socialization of the school. Lawson (1983b) believes that induction to teaching for some begins in their teacher education program while induction for others begins when they enter schools as beginning teachers.

Occupational socialization has been used to analyze how pre- and in-service teachers learn, interpret and deliver *SE* (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004; Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a). Researchers using occupational socialization to examine teachers' use of *SE* have identified that teachers can teach *SE* in one of three ways (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008). Firstly, in its "full version", where a season consistent with all of Siedentop's (Siedentop et al., 2011) recommendations is delivered. Secondly, in a "watered down version", where parts of *SE*'s framework are omitted from the season. And thirdly, in a "cafeteria style", where only parts of *SE* would be taught within traditional sporting units. It was concluded that for teachers to teach *SE* in its "full version", they would need to experience high quality *SE*-PETE with opportunities to teach *SE* while being supervised (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008). There appears to be some discrepancy regarding the impact of coaching orientations to teaching on teachers' delivery of *SE*. Curtner-Smith et al. (2008) found that teachers with a moderate or hard core teaching orientation were less likely to deliver the "full version" of *SE*. It has been noted that high quality sporting experiences are associated with *SE*'s pedagogy, that *SE* appealed to PSTs as it was congruent with their previous sporting experiences

and that it provided a working environment that replicated the world of extracurricular sport (Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004). It is questionable, however, how much emphasis we should place on teachers delivering *SE* in its “full version”, in particular for PSTs who are likely to be attempting to teach *SE* for the first time. It has been recommended that teachers using *SE* for the first time “do a very basic form of the model and then gradually add to its complexity” (Siedentop, Hastie, & Van Der Mars, 2004, p. 16).

The occupational socialization research on *SE* suggests that high-quality *SE*-PETE experiences are vital for the successful delivery of the model, which includes multiple opportunities to experience, teach and critique *SE* (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a). However, it is also acknowledged that these experiences require considerable time and faculty expertise (Kinchin, 2003; Oslin et al., 2001). It has also been suggested that ideal scenarios for teaching *SE* on PSTs’ teaching placement would involve PSTs being supervised by cooperating teachers with knowledge of *SE* (Curtner-Smith, 2012) and it has been acknowledged that cooperating teachers with such knowledge may be limited (Meeteer, Housner, Bulger, Hawkins, & Weigand, 2012). In addition, the teachers observed in many of the studies on *SE* were selected as they were considered to be high quality teachers who were likely to use *SE*. Even when this selection process was applied, many teachers were unable to teach *SE* in its “full version”, with some choosing not to deliver it with particular student groups or, in one case, not teach *SE* at all (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a).

The *SE* research needs to continue to address the dearth of research regarding PSTs’ experiences of learning and delivering the model. Specifically, it needs to determine PSTs’ delivery of *SE* when they encounter differing *SE*-PETE experiences and teach in disparate school contexts. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the transition made by one PST from experiencing a *SE* season of net games taught during a year three undergraduate module in a four-year PETE program (Deenihan, MacPhail & Young, 2011), to delivering a *SE* season on his subsequent year four teaching placement in schools and after his first year teaching as a qualified physical education teacher. Occupational socialization was a functional framework by which to understand the factors which influenced his interpretation and delivery of *SE*.

## Method

In a bid to offer a rich insight into the realities of teaching *SE* in a school as a PST, the study followed a case study approach (Yin, 2009). Yin has defined case studies as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1984, p. 23). The PST was the sole participant in the study and an in-depth investigation was used to portray an accurate account of his experiences transitioning from learning *SE* in his PETE program to delivering a season on his teaching placement. To do this, multiple sources of evidence were collected and triangulated. The case study design has previously been used to examine *SE* seasons delivered by both preservice and in-service teachers (McMahon & MacPhail, 2007; Sinelnikov, 2009).

## Participant and PETE Program

Barry (pseudonym) was a 21 year-old male PST who was in his final year of study in a four-year PETE program in Ireland. Barry had completed a practical *SE* experience during the previous year of his PETE program. The module was designed by the first and second author along with the lecturer of the module, to be educative and prepare PSTs to teach *SE* in an Irish postprimary school setting. The lecturer of the module was an experienced teacher in her first year teaching in the PETE program and was familiar with the *SE* model as a school physical education teacher. The module was delivered over thirteen weeks with hour-long practical sessions twice each week. During this experience, the lecturer modeled *SE* allowing the PSTs to “live the curriculum” (Oslin et al., 2001), where they experienced a *SE* season similar to how *SE* would be delivered in a school context. Disparate aspects of *SE* were introduced gradually over the *SE* season (Table 1), including team selection and affiliation (week 2), roles (week 3), formal competition and culminating event (week 4), record keeping (week 5), importance of festivity (week 6), refereeing (week 7) and the use of modified games (week 9). The *SE* season was divided into three mini seasons (three to four weeks each) of tennis, badminton and volleyball, respectively, to simulate teaching blocks in Irish postprimary schools, where sports are generally taught over approximately six weeks. The teams remained consistent throughout the three mini seasons and a culminating event was held at the end of each mini season. PSTs affiliated to a team, adopted various roles, and kept records of performance scores. Barry was formally assessed during the latter stages of the module, where he was required to microteach a group of his peers for 15 min while delivering either a warm-up, skill development or modified game phase of a *SE* lesson. Barry was also assessed through his *SE* portfolio, for which a group of five PSTs had to develop a sample season plan for a particular sport, including task cards and a discussion on how they would adapt *SE* to an Irish postprimary school context.

It was not possible to implement all the recommendations for *SE*-PETE (Curtner-Smith, 2012) within the PETE program due to staffing expertise, time constraints and organizational constraints. It was not feasible to provide PSTs with an opportunity to see *SE* being taught in a school setting as there was no teacher in the local area using *SE* in their school physical education curriculum. Similarly, as physical education in Ireland was generally taught through direct teaching styles (MacPhail & Halbert, 2005; Sugrue, 2004), it was difficult to arrange university-school partnerships to show the reality of teaching *SE* in Irish postprimary schools. It was also not possible to allow PSTs a chance to teach *SE* during their early field experience during their second year of the PETE program as there was no *SE*-PETE experience provided until their third year of the program.

Subsequent to his participation in the module, Barry volunteered to continue his involvement in contributing to studying the *SE* experience by agreeing, in completing his final year project assignment, to reflect on his experiences of delivering *SE* in his year four teaching placement. During this period, Barry's *SE* season was observed weekly by the first author. Barry was not supervised by the first author and these observations had no bearing on his grade and were solely for the purpose of data collection. The first author did, however, provide informal feedback and advice on some occasions during Barry's teaching placement.

**Table 1 Barry's Sport Education Season**

<b>Week / Activity</b>	<b>Activity Focus</b>	<b>Sport Education Focus</b>
Week 1— Basketball	Ball Handling skills	Introduction to Sport Education
	Introduce rules of Basketball	Selection of captains
	Participation in a small sided games of Basketball	Team selection using blind draft
Week 2— Basketball	Introduction of lay up	Announcement of teams
	Introduction of set shot	Delegation of roles
	Play competitive game that addressed these skills	Introduction of warm-up coach Complete team affiliation sheet
Week 3— Basketball	Introduction of dribbling	Introduction of equipment coach
	Modified relay game to demonstrate shooting and dribbling skills	Introduction of skills coach
Week 4— Basketball	Introduce chest pass and bounce pass	Precompetition games for ranking
	Play full game incorporating the skills learned previously	Discussion of culminating event; competition format, uniforms, festivities and awards
Week 5— Basketball	Four teams played in two separate finals based on the rankings, top two teams played against each other as did the bottom two teams	Culminating Event
		National anthem, team colors, competitive games, awards for MVP and winning team, prizes for all students
Week 6— Volleyball	Introduce volleyball	Change of team captains
	Ball control skills	Revisit the focus of Sport Education and student roles
	Court familiarization	Discuss how to improve season
Week 7— Volleyball	Introduction of J4 Volleyball	Introduce point scoring system
	Progressions of volley/set	Introduction of modified game
	Friendly team game	
Week 8— Volleyball	Introduce forearm pass	Introduction of role of referee
	Introduce responsibilities of referee	Precompetition games for ranking position
	Friendly team game	Discussion of culminating event; competition format, uniforms, festivities and awards
Week 9— Volleyball	Team with the highest points gets to pick their opponents in the semi final. The other two teams play in the other semi final. Winning teams play in the Grand Final.	Culminating Event National anthem, team colors, competitive games, awards for MVP and winning team, prizes for all students

## Setting

St John's (pseudonym) was a coeducational postprimary school in a rural town in the east of Ireland. The school had an attendance of approximately 370 postprimary level students and an additional 42 students took part in an adult education course. The school was the only postprimary school in its catchment area and there were single-sex postprimary schools in adjoining towns and villages. The school had a gymnasium the size of a basketball court, two all-weather playing areas and one grass playing pitch. The school also had ample equipment to teach physical education and had a strong sporting ethos, particularly in the Gaelic games of hurling and football. The school had two full-time physical education teachers, a male and female, with one and three years of experience respectively. The female teacher was assigned as Barry's cooperating teacher, observing some of Barry's lessons and providing feedback and support. The school management also provided support to Barry during his teaching placement. There was not a predominant use of any curriculum models in the physical education program at the particular school and none of the students in the school had experienced *SE* before Barry's teaching placement. Barry's cooperating teacher and the other physical education teacher both had limited knowledge of *SE* and were unable to provide feedback or advice specific to *SE* during Barry's teaching placement.

Barry chose to introduce *SE* to one group, a Transition Year group of 19 students (aged 15–17 years). This decision was due to the group's weekly time allocation for physical education being 70 minutes, implying there would be sufficient time to cover aspects of *SE* and the related content. In the Irish school system, Transition Year is a voluntary school year between the junior and senior cycle years, tending to focus on exploratory learning and work experience. The time allocated to physical education in Transition Year tends to be higher than other years of postprimary schooling. During Barry's other weekly allocated classes, he taught through more traditional teaching styles, not relying on any curriculum or instructional models in particular. During his *SE* season, Barry introduced the concept of *SE*, identified captains, asked the captains to select teams, completed team affiliation processes and introduced various roles such as equipment coach, warm-up coach, skills coach and referee. The students adopted these roles during two mini seasons of basketball and volleyball (durations of five weeks and four weeks respectively) with culminating events at the end of each mini season. This design was congruent with his *SE*-PETE experience and also suited the school physical education program, where individual sporting activities were generally taught over a period of five to six weeks. The students remained on the same team throughout the two mini seasons and roles were rotated on a weekly or biweekly basis.

## Data Collection

A number of data collection techniques were employed to increase the reliability and triangulation of the data (Table 2). Barry participated in a preteaching placement interview, which investigated his acculturation to teaching, experiences of learning *SE* in PETE and his intentions to use *SE* during his teaching placement. Barry's *SE* class was observed weekly for each of the nine weeks by the first author who kept a reflective journal (Bell, 1993) of incidents that occurred within the class. After each of the nine lessons, the first author conducted a postlesson



reflection interview with Barry that explored his perceptions of how effective the class had been and discussion on incidents in the class. Barry also completed a written postlesson reflection with reference to the same. Informal conversations about the previous and next lesson usually followed these interviews, where the first author would answer any queries Barry had concerning the sequencing of the *SE* season. Barry's weekly lesson plan and his scheme of work for the *SE* season

**Table 2 Data Collection Measures**

<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Data Collected</b>
Preteaching placement Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His acculturation to teaching</li> <li>• His perceptions of their PETE program</li> <li>• His intentions and feelings of using <i>SE</i></li> </ul>
Scheme of Work Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His intentions to include <i>SE</i> during his TP and his rationale for doing so</li> </ul>
Lesson Plans Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How he planned to include <i>SE</i> weekly</li> </ul>
Observation of Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How he did/ did not adhere to the lesson plan</li> <li>• How he included <i>SE</i> in his lessons</li> </ul>
Postlesson Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussed instances in the lesson</li> <li>• Discussed what changes he had to make to the lesson plan</li> <li>• Discussed the teacher-student relationship</li> </ul>
PST's Postlesson Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His personal reflection on the lesson</li> <li>• His perception on what went well, what they would have done differently and how that lesson will inform their next lesson</li> </ul>
Mid Term Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their perceptions of how their season was progressing</li> <li>• The barriers to teaching <i>SE</i> in schools</li> <li>• What changes they would make</li> <li>• How their PETE program helps them to teach <i>SE</i></li> <li>• The PST's future intentions for <i>SE</i></li> </ul>
Postteaching placement Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His organizational socialization in his school</li> <li>• His employment of <i>SE</i></li> <li>• Influence of his PETE program on his use of <i>SE</i></li> <li>• Recommendation for the inclusion of <i>SE</i> in PETE</li> </ul>
Interview as Qualified Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His continued use of <i>SE</i></li> <li>• His intentions for future use of <i>SE</i></li> <li>• Influence of his PETE program on his use of <i>SE</i></li> <li>• Recommendation for the inclusion of <i>SE</i> in PETE</li> </ul>

were also collected to cross reference Barry's intentional and actual delivery of the lesson. In week five of the nine-week teaching placement, Barry participated in a focus groups with other PSTs who were also delivering *SE* during their teaching placement, which investigated their initial experiences delivering *SE*. At the end of the season, a postteaching placement interview was conducted with Barry, investigating the organizational socialization encouraged by the school culture he was teaching in, his perceptions of the *SE* season and any recommendations to enhance the inclusion of *SE* in the PETE program. The final interview with Barry was conducted once he had completed eight months of his first year teaching as a qualified teacher. From the perspective of being a newly qualified teacher, this interview aimed to establish Barry's continued (or discontinued) use of *SE* and his perceptions of his *SE* experiences he received through the PETE program. Ethical approval was granted by the relevant University's Research Ethics Committee.

## Data Analysis

All interviews and focus groups were transcribed verbatim. Lesson observations were typed weekly and Barry's lesson plans and postlesson reflections were collected weekly. Each week, the lesson plan, lesson observation, postlesson interview and postlesson reflection, were all compiled onto a word processing document so all data relevant to each lesson were together. All data sources were analyzed using thematic coding (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), where the data were read and reread to identify themes. Evidence supporting the respective themes for each lesson was compiled on one document for each week of the *SE* unit. On completion of the *SE* unit, each theme and respective evidence arising from the nine week *SE* unit were collated for analysis. The pre, mid- and post- interviews were analyzed in a similar way and appropriate evidence to support themes was merged with the data arising over the nine week *SE* unit. The noted themes were then collapsed into main themes to facilitate analysis and presentation of the findings. Barry's acculturation was primarily determined from analysis of his previous school and sporting experiences and his reasons for becoming a physical education teacher, collected through his preteaching placement interview, which used an adapted interview script previously used by Curtner-Smith et al. (2008). His professional socialization was determined to some extent from analysis of previous research on the *SE* experience he received in PETE (Deenihan et al., 2011). This was supported by data from Barry's pre- and postteaching placement interviews, where he discussed his PETE experiences and how they subsequently aided his teaching of *SE*. Understanding Barry's organizational socialization was aided through analyzing the first author's weekly observations of *SE* in the school as well as the postteaching placement interview and informal conversations between the first author and Barry throughout the teaching placement.

## Reliability and Trustworthiness

Data from interviews were transcribed verbatim by the first author to eliminate errors and ensure reliability. Member checking was conducted with Barry, during which he read a copy of the transcripts and verified their content. Data (from Barry and the first author) were triangulated to ensure a variety of data sources were used to support each theme.

## Results

Three main themes were identified through analysis of all the data sources. The first main theme of “Influence of occupational socialization” relied heavily on specific questions in his pre, mid- and postteaching placement interviews, which explored his acculturation to teaching, the influence of his PETE program and the organizational socialization he experienced during his teaching placement. These questions, along with subthemes, such as references to external sport, using a facilitator style approach, similar season to PETE, presence of cooperating teacher and influence of first author, helped to consolidate this theme. The second main theme of “Difficulties encountered while delivering *SE*” was developed through the collapsing of subthemes such as amount of planning, disruptions in the timetable and the lack of effectiveness of student coaches. Finally, the third main theme of “The enduring enjoyment of *SE*” was developed from the subthemes including student and teacher enthusiasm, positive student-teacher relationship, using *SE* in other classes and the teacher’s continued use of *SE*.

### Influence of Occupational Socialization

#### ***Acculturation—Influence of a Teaching Orientation With a Coaching Disposition.***

Barry appeared to possess a teaching orientation but had a strong disposition to coaching as well. Barry spoke about the significant role of sport in his life as a result of his family, “My father and brother would be very active... there is a big history of [traditional Gaelic games] so ah so that’s where it kind of funneled into me” (Preteaching placement interview). He was a successful athlete and played sport at the regional level (Preteaching placement interview). He spoke about influential coaches, in particular a, “county minor coach, he was I felt he was excellent he kind of respected you...he valued your opinion and he kind of did like to delegate responsibility...he was friendly” (Preteaching placement interview). When asked why he pursued a career in teaching, Barry illustrated his teaching orientation and influence of his disposition to coaching, “I suppose I would have been influenced a lot from my own PE teacher...I felt that also my high interest in sport I would be suitable for the job” (Preteaching placement interview). Barry’s PETE program appeared to have offered him an opportunity to challenge some misconceptions he had toward teaching, which could perhaps be attributed to his involvement in organized sport, “I was always of the view that it was all towards competition that was the way I was kind of brought up ... whereas now I see participation as a huge factor, participation at any level” (Preteaching placement interview). Barry also expressed that he was strongly influenced by PETE faculty who promoted participation in physical education, “I think I was most kind of influenced by teachers who focused on, or lecturers who focused on, participation” (Preteaching placement interview).

Barry’s teaching orientation and disposition to coaching were clearly evident during the *SE* season. He rarely taught didactically and often asked the students for feedback on practices (Lesson observations 2, 8), adopted a facilitator style approach (Lesson observations 3, 6, 8), asked the students what changes they would like to make to the season (Lesson observation 6), and used the captains to resolve issues in the team (Lesson observations 6, 8). He also repeatedly related practices to his own personal sporting experiences and, on numerous occasions he related

class situations to the Irish Gaelic games (Lesson observations 5, 6, 9), which had influenced Barry strongly during his childhood (Preteaching placement interview). He also made efforts to connect his basketball season to the National Basketball Association (Lesson observations 2, 5) and other national/international events with the use of national anthems during culminating events (Lesson observations 5, 9).

**Professional Socialization—Reproducing and Critiquing the SE-PETE Experience.** Barry's delivery of *SE* was visibly influenced by the PETE program, with the first author observing on numerous occasions that Barry delivered a *SE* season similar to the one he had experienced in the PETE program. Similarities in the design of the *SE* season Barry experienced as part of the PETE program, and what he chose to deliver in the school *SE* season, included participation in basketball from weeks 1–5 and volleyball from weeks 6–9, with a culminating event at the end of each mini season. In addition, Barry used the same team selection methods (Lesson plan and Lesson observation 1), similar team affiliation procedures (Lesson plan and Lesson observation 2) and similar practices for preparing skills coaches to perform their role (Lesson plan and Lesson observation 3). There were a number of occasions where the first author observed that Barry used games and practices that were similar to those shared in his *SE*-PETE module (e.g., Lesson observations 3, 6, 7). Barry commented on the influence of his *SE*-PETE experience:

Well I suppose I based a lot of what I did, on the Sport Education model that I did [in PETE] ...most of the features that [the lecturer] included in hers I definitely replicated in mine, I kind of picked and chose what were going to work the best. (Post-teaching placement interview)

Barry was also constructively critical of the *SE*-PETE module he had experienced, believing that the module was compromised in attempting to introduce and assess three sports along with in 12 weeks. Before beginning his teaching placement, he commented:

I felt maybe we could have had more time actually experiencing Sport Education. It was 12 weeks of maybe an hour or two a week which to go through a Sport Education season plus learn how to teach three different games was very intense. (Pre-teaching placement interview)

A feature that was absent from his *SE*-PETE experience was the opportunity to observe *SE* being delivered in a school physical education context. Barry believed that "even if you got a class or a [post-primary] class in for a few weeks it would be helpful just to observe the class as [the lecturer] teaches it" (Postteaching placement interview). Barry expanded:

Sport Education...it looked so perfect when teaching with [the lecturer] because she had the control of PE students. In real life it's a whole different kind of ball game...going to a school and observing Sport Education would be a great asset to the module itself. (Post-teaching placement interview)

**Organizational Socialization—Extent of Support Structures in the School Context.** The organizational socialization Barry encountered within his school affected his delivery of *SE*. Before beginning his teaching placement, Barry had met his cooperating teachers and received positive feedback regarding his proposed

use of *SE*, “They are very positive towards it...one of the teachers have asked could they perform the Sport Education model with another class while I was there” (Preteaching placement interview). Barry frequently commented on the supportive structures in the physical education department and in the wider school community. He spoke about the school having a unified approach to teaching and how it was easy to ask for help and support from other members of staff (Postteaching placement interview). Barry also spoke about the flexibility of the physical education program in the school and how he was not restricted in his use of teaching styles or class content:

[The content of the physical education classes] is left up to the teacher themselves. There is no kind of conversation or discussion about the teaching or learning strategies that you do use in your class...I was free to teach whatever teaching or learning strategies I did want to use. (Pre-teaching placement interview)

However, neither of Barry’s cooperating teachers had used *SE* previously in the school and their only exposure had been during short introductions to the model in their teacher education program and in-service training (Preteaching placement interview). The first author also observed little or no supervision of Barry’s *SE* lessons during his teaching placement placements (Lesson observations 1–9). In addition, Barry’s university supervisor was also unfamiliar with the model:

She didn’t know too much basically about Sport Education. She was very new to that particular teaching model...it may have been more effective if obviously if she had some experience or knowledge of Sport Education to give me appropriate or really direct concise feedback. (Post-teaching placement interview)

The only source of direct *SE* feedback Barry received came from the first author during informal conversations before and after lessons. It was evident on a number of occasions that Barry had implemented some of the recommendations given to him by the first author. The first author had suggested Barry to consult the cooperating teacher to ensure teams were fair (Lesson observation 2), prepare a task card portfolio to aid the warm up coaches to perform their role (Lesson observation 4), use a point reward system rather than a point deduction system (Lesson observation 6), and promote the culminating event in his other non-PE class with the group (Lesson observation 8). At the end of his teaching placement, Barry spoke about the influence of the first author’s support on his *SE* season:

It was a definite help to again kind of have somebody else looking into your lesson in a different perspective to you...I think [it would have been difficult to teach Sport Education without this support] because it was my first experience. It’s always nice to get some feedback from someone who has experience. (Post-teaching placement interview)

## Difficulties Encountered While Delivering *SE*

Barry encountered some difficulties as he strived to deliver *SE*. One of the primary concerns Barry had was the effectiveness of his student coaches. Before his

teaching placement commenced, Barry expressed concern that the student coaches may not be capable of performing their role, "You have the risk of maybe if the skills coach is maybe not competent enough to show a particular skill" (Preteaching placement interview), and again early in the *SE* season, "One thing that may not be as good is the quality of the coaching" (Postlesson interview 3). During the early part of the *SE* season, the first author noted, "I am concerned with the ability of the warm-up coaches in delivering an effective warm-up" (Lesson observation 4). To counteract this, Barry used task cards to help aid the skills coaches (Lesson plans 3–8) and warm-up coaches (Lesson plans 5–8) and these additions helped the student coaches perform their role more effectively (Lesson observation 5, 6, 7, 8). Even as a qualified teacher, Barry was still unsure of the effectiveness of the student coaches, stating, "maybe the demonstration of the skills by some of the pupils who wouldn't have a high ability, that would kind of be a [deterrent to using *SE*]" (Interview as qualified teacher).

Barry also admitted that planning his *SE* classes took a considerable amount of time, "there is definitely a bit more work in *SE* than in other classes" (Midterm focus group). Similarly, he reflected after one session, "I had put a serious amount of preparation in before the class in terms of planning and making task cards" (Postlesson reflection 6). The first author had also observed the considerable planning that Barry had spent on lessons (Lesson observations 4, 7). Barry reflected at the end of the season, "One problem I probably encountered was there was a lot of preparation for the class more so than other classes" (Postteaching placement interview). However, Barry believed that the additional workload was necessary for his first time using *SE* and did not believe that he would be less likely to use *SE* as a result of the additional workload required:

[after using *SE* a few times] you will build up kind of a stockpile if you like of resources so I think initially getting over that hill would definitely lessen the work load... I don't think it would be a deterrent [to using *SE*] this extra work. (Post-teaching placement interview)

Teaching through *SE* also required a significant amount of structure and did not allow much room for absences and changes in class schedule. During a rescheduled class many of the students were absent and some did not have their physical education gear (Lesson observation 8). Barry reflected after the lesson, "I was slightly disappointed with the way the lesson went...there were a lot of distractions and disruptions to the [planned] lesson" (Postlesson reflection 8). Subsequently, this lesson had an effect on the following week's culminating event, which was also changed from the scheduled, "a few of the students did not have their gear as the class was changed from their original timetable. There was little evidence of team colors, another implication of the change in class time" (Lesson observation 9).

## The Enduring Enjoyment of Delivering *SE*

It was clear throughout Barry's teaching placement that he enjoyed teaching *SE* and appreciated its benefits. Even after only a few weeks of his teaching placement, Barry expressed how he enjoyed using *SE*, "it's kind of one of the classes I look forward going in to teach...it's a better atmosphere...it's much more positive" (Midterm focus group). Barry made references during the season to how he was

enjoying the season, commenting that in the lessons, “there was a very productive and positive environment” (Postlesson reflection 2) and that he “was very happy with the lesson” (Postlesson interview 7). Barry also appreciated the student-teacher relationship commenting that “there are never any negative comment [from the students]” (Postlesson interview 7) and talked about how he favored the change in student-teacher relationship, “yeah it’s not really a student-teacher relationship anymore it’s just nearly a facilitator, maybe someone in your club like an older player says to a younger player like ‘try this next time’” (Midterm focus group).

At the end of the teaching placement, Barry was confident that he would like to deliver *SE* again. Reflecting on how he had incorporated *SE* into other physical education classes, he said, “I have blended it in to other classes in terms of I’ve used teams, I’ve used roles because it does alleviate a lot of the pressure on you” (Postlesson interview 9). When reflecting back to his teaching placement, Barry spoke about his enjoyment of *SE* and his intentions to deliver *SE* again:

I definitely would use it again, I suppose starting off there is a lot of preparation that goes into it but then that class kind of runs more smoothly for you. So in that regard I would have been happy to use it again after teaching placement. (Interview as qualified teacher)

As a result of his positive experiences of *SE* during the PETE module and teaching placement, Barry was keen to attempt *SE* during his first year of teaching as a newly qualified teacher. Within his first year, he made a conscious choice to deliver it, believing *SE* would suit a particular student group:

I thought it might be beneficial with one particular group who are very happy very cooperative kind of group and they have a great attitude to PE and I thought that this might kind of promote their PE class...there is a wide range of abilities so like I said again this might level out the playing field making pupils more aware of the other students in their class. (Interview as qualified teacher)

Despite his enthusiasm to use *SE*, this was the only class that Barry used *SE* with, as he did not believe *SE* would work with some of his other class groups. Barry taught three different year groups but opted to deliver *SE* to only one second year class. He believed that the other groups were either too immature or disruptive to be given the increased freedom and responsibility of *SE*, “I felt that first years were a slight bit immature for it...my third years they are a troublesome group...so I have to use a very direct kind of teaching” (Interview as qualified teacher).

## Discussion

Barry’s occupational socialization had a substantial influence on his experiences learning and delivering *SE*. Barry’s teaching orientation allowed him to easily adopt a facilitator style approach and relinquish control to his students, a practice encouraged by *SE*. In addition, his strong coaching disposition and sporting background encouraged him to promote authenticity by relating practices back to his personal sporting experiences. This somewhat contradicts the notion that teachers who possess a coaching orientation to teaching will deliver *SE* to lesser extents (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008). Although Barry did convey a teaching orientation,

his *SE* season was significantly enhanced due to the close link to external sport. As *SE* attempts to provide students with authentic sporting experiences (Siedentop, 1994), it would seem favorable that those delivering *SE* would have an experience of sport and coaching. It is also interesting to observe that Barry's acculturation was further influenced during his time in the PETE program, believing that his teaching orientation was strengthened by having experienced PETE faculty who focused on participation and innovative teaching styles.

The *SE*-PETE Barry experienced influenced the *SE* season he delivered during his teaching placement, admitting to building most of his school physical education *SE* season around the *SE*-PETE season. This study supports the importance of PETE programs providing PSTs with an opportunity to experience the *SE* curriculum first hand as a participant (Jenkins, 2004; Kinchin, 2003; Oslin et al., 2001). Barry did admit that his exposure to *SE* in his PETE program could have been enhanced. Specifically, Barry would have appreciated the opportunity to observe *SE* being taught in a school setting. The PETE program in this study was unable to provide Barry with this opportunity and some of the other opportunities recommended in the literature, such as teaching faculty designed *SE* seasons on early field experiences (Curtner-Smith, 2012). Such opportunities were not possible due to staffing and time constraints, along with a limited pool of physical education teachers practicing *SE* in postprimary schools in Ireland.

The organizational socialization Barry experienced within his school impacted his use of *SE* both positively and negatively. As Curtner-Smith et al. (2008) suggested the lack of custodial nature in the physical education department facilitated Barry's delivery of *SE*. However, Barry had no formal support structures in the school as regards teaching *SE* as neither cooperating teacher had experience of *SE*. In this instance, the void was filled by the first author who provided weekly informal feedback and advice to Barry. This raises the issue of the currency in providing similar support structures during the planning and delivery phases of *SE* in schools as cooperating teachers with a knowledge of *SE* are limited (Meeteer et al., 2012). It is also unrealistic to expect all cooperating teachers to possess a sufficient level of knowledge in *SE* to provide feedback for PSTs attempting to deliver *SE*. Lund, Gurvitch and Metzler (2008) highlight the importance of cooperating teachers facilitating PSTs' learning but found that only a small minority of cooperating teachers used *SE* in their physical education programs. Future research needs to focus on practices that PETE programs can offer to facilitate the PSTs' delivery of *SE* during their teaching placement in schools where appropriate support structures are limited. Barry's university supervisor also had no experience of *SE* and, as a result, Barry chose not to have his university tutor visit the *SE* class as one of his official school visits. This may be another concern PSTs could have in attempting to deliver *SE* or other new teaching strategies during their final year teaching placement, where their teaching performance may have a relationship with grading and final certification.

The difficulties experienced by Barry while delivering *SE* are congruent with the findings of other researchers. Barry questioned whether student coaches possessed the necessary expertise required to teach their peers. Similar concerns regarding the effectiveness of student coaches have been shared in the literature (Alexander & Luckman, 2001; Brunton, 2003; Carlson & Hastie, 1997; Curnrow & Macdonald, 1995; McMahon & MacPhail, 2007; Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2007). Consideration needs to be paid to the detriment of skill acquisition in physical



education, which may arise when introducing students to the role of coach. Barry's concern with the amount of planning required for the *SE* season is also acknowledged elsewhere (Pill, 2008). PETE programs need to be aware of these potential challenges that arise when PSTs attempt to introduce *SE* to K-12 physical education programs, and develop *SE* experiences in the PETE program that allow PSTs to be aware of, and address, such challenges.

It was promising that Barry had chosen to deliver *SE* in his first year of teaching as a qualified teacher. There was no requirement for Barry to teach *SE* in his school but he continued to believe it would benefit his students, and delivered *SE* in a school where neither the students nor teachers had experience of *SE*. As minimal research has focused on the longevity of *SE* in schools and it has been noted that *SE*'s presence in a school physical education curriculum can diminish after time (Alexander & Luckman, 2001), it is promising that Barry continues to implement *SE* as a qualified teacher. Barry was deliberately selective with his use of *SE* with one particular class, believing that it would not be suitable for some of his more disruptive class groups (Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009a).

The authors chose not to place an emphasis on Barry implementing *SE* in its "full version". Cognizant of the recommendations to implement *SE* gradually (Siedentop et al., 2004) and the difficulties many teachers face when delivering *SE* for the first time (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; McCaughy et al., 2004; McMahon & MacPhail, 2007), it was deemed inappropriate to expect and require Barry to deliver a "full" *SE* season. As *SE* is not yet commonplace in Irish postprimary schools, it is difficult to provide Irish PSTs with opportunities to observe *SE* being taught well in practice and similarly difficult for PSTs to receive appropriate supervision and feedback from cooperating teachers who may not have a knowledge of *SE*. It is likely that some PETE programs face similar difficulties and that many schools may be unable to provide authentic and meaningful experiences deemed ideal for teaching *SE*. In addition, limited research has attempted to align the extent to which the *SE* model is used to the effectiveness of the related *SE* season. We should instead encourage the introduction of components of *SE* and gradually increase the content of the *SE* season, in a manner which reflects the teacher's confidence delivering *SE*, students' readiness for the model and the school context in which the model is to be delivered.

This study has aimed to contribute to the current paucity of literature regarding the inclusion of *SE* in PETE programs. Specifically, the study used occupational socialization to understand Barry's interpretation and delivery of *SE*, having experienced a faculty modeled *SE* season in his PETE program. This study offers insights into how such an experience can help PSTs learn *SE* and deliver it effectively on their subsequent teaching placement and careers as a qualified teachers. It also highlights how Barry's sporting background aided his *SE* season and helped to make it more authentic. The authors did have some difficulty in determining Barry's orientation to teaching and felt that the occupational socialization framework did little to acknowledge that a teacher could possess a teaching orientation while also involved heavily in extracurricular sport. Based on Barry's preteaching placement interview, the framework may have determined that he possessed a moderate coaching orientation. However, however it became evident to the first author from his prolonged exposure to Barry that he possessed a teaching orientation. It seems unreasonable to place teachers on either end of a spectrum based on limited knowledge gathered

from interviews or questionnaires. Future research is encouraged to examine the fidelity of Lawson's (1983a, 1983b) hypotheses and whether additional orientations to teaching should be acknowledged. For those of us interested in pursuing *SE* as a common practice in PETE programs and school physical education, we need to continue to examine the effectiveness and practicalities of the various recommendations provided in the *SE*-PETE literature (Collier, 1998; Curtner-Smith et al., 2008; Kinchin et al., 2005) and how PETE programs can overcome staffing, time and financial barriers to provide these experiences. A limitation of the study was that the PETE program did not offer many of the methods noted in the literature (Curtner-Smith, 2012) regarding the inclusion of *SE* in PETE, as well as that only one PST was observed during his teaching placement. Further studies need to identify how teachers with differing acculturations to teaching, and working in disparate contexts from each other, experience learning and delivering *SE*. It is important to acknowledge that the *SE* research has made efforts to address the shortfalls in the research regarding how teachers learn and use *SE*. Further research that explores the realities, not ideals, of *SE* in practice, and explores scenarios that can be reproduced in other schools and PETE programs is to be welcomed.

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